

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-08 FAA-00 DOTE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 /072 W

-----007599 081309Z /43

R 071503Z OCT 77

FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5444

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USNATO

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 2609

E O 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV EAIR BQG

SUBJ: TEGEL'S SHARE OF TURKISH WORKER TRAFFIC DECLINES

REF: (A) USBERLIN 2279, (B) BONN 14851, (C) ANKARA 6338

1. SENAT HAS PROVIDED FIGURES WHICH INDICATE A DECLINE IN TEGEL AIRPORT'S SHARE OF BERLIN TURKISH WORKER TRAFFIC STARTING IN JUNE 1977, WHEN REGULAR INTERFLUG FLIGHTS BETWEEN SCHOENEFELD AND ISTANBUL WERE INAUGURATED. DURING FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF 1977, TEGEL HANDLED OVER 60PCT OF TURKISH WORKER TRAFFIC IN EACH MONTH, A PATTERN OF DOMINANCE WHICH HAD PREVAILED IN 1975 AND 1976; IN JUNE, HOWEVER, TEGEL'S PROPORTION WAS 57PCT, IN JULY, 59PCT; IN IN AUGUST, 51PCT, AND SEPTEMBER, 52PCT.

2. COMMENT: SENAT STATISTICS INDICATE THAT NEW INTERFLUG TURKEY SERVICE IS AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR IN RECENT TIPPING OF
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TURKISH WORKER TRAFFIC TOWARD SCHOENEFELD. IN FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF OPERATION, INTERFLUG HAS CAPTURED 7-9PCT OF TOTAL BERLIN TURKISH WORKER TRAFFIC, FLYING IN EACH MONTH BETWEEN 17PCT AND 27PCT AS MANY PASSENGERS AS THY. WE DO NOT SHARE TURKS' APPARENT BELIEF (REF C) THAT INTERFLUG CONSTITUTES "NO PROBLEM" FOR THY; GIVEN SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS ON TICKET PRICES OFFERED BY INTERFLUG, WE WOULD EXPECT - ABSENT

RESTRICTIONS - THAT INTERFLUG WOULD MAKE FURTHER INROADS OVER THE LONG TERM, TAKING BUSINESS AWAY FROM THY AS WELL AS TEGEL, ALTHOUGH TO DATE NO CLEAR TREND OF GROWTH (OR DECAY) OF INTERFLUG BUSINESS HAS REVEALED ITSELF. INCIDENTALLY, SENAT TOTALS SHOW THAT BETWEEN 853 (AUGUST) AND 1357 (JULY) PASSENGERS FLEW EACH MONTH ON INTERFLUG TURKISH WORKER FLIGHTS OVER JUNE-SEPTEMBER PERIOD. THESE NUMBERS, OBTAINED BY PHYSICAL COUNTS BY WEST BERLIN POLICE OF CATEGORIES OF TRAVELERS USING WALTERSDORFER CHAUSSEE CROSSING FROM WEST BERLIN TO SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT, ARE AT VARIANCE WITH AUGUST FIGURE OF 224 CITED REFTEL C. LOCAL WEST BERLIN THY REPRESENTATIVE EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN IN AUGUST WITH EFFECTS OF INTERFLUG PRICE CUTTING AND SAID HE INTENDED TO VISIT EAST BERLIN IN SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM WITH INTERFLUG. SUBSEQUENTLY, HE HAS GIVEN VARIOUS EXCUSES FOR NOT HAVING HELD SUCH DISCUSSIONS, WHICH TO OUR KNOWLEDGE HAVE STILL NOT TAKEN PLACE.

3. WE HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED SENAT'S COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH SITUATION, BUT RECENT UNFAVORABLE STATISTICAL TRENDS WILL NO DOUBT BOLSTER SENAT'S CASE THAT STRONG ACTION IS NEEDED.GEORGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MIGRATORY WORKERS, SUPPLEMENTAL AIRLINES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977USBERL02609
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770368-0487
Format: TEL
From: USBERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771080/aaaacpzc.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5e5aa933-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 USBERLIN 2279, 77 BONN 14851, 77 ANKARA 6338
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 986890
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TEGEL'S SHARE OF TURKISH WORKER TRAFFIC DECLINES
TAGS: PGOV, EAIR, WB, TU, BQG
To: BONN
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5e5aa933-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009